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by fresh additions of syrup was continued until the crystals presented the diverse forms, from solid-looking truncated cubes to long, slender prisms which characterize cane sugar. But now the microscope was no longer needed, and the growth was so rapid that each successive addition of syrup seemed to produce an appreciable enlargement of the crystals.

NOTE ON A HABIT OF THE RED ANTS.

BY ROBERT HAY, JUNCTION CITY.

Two years ago Professor Snow and Mr. Savage directed the attention of the Academy to the fact that the red ant of the plains covered his large hills with glittering fragments of quartz, feldspar, and other bright minerals. Glass beads were also mentioned as occurring, and a general conclusion was arrived at that this bright material was not brought from underground, but gathered around the hill and used probably with reference either to the reflecting or radiating power of the polished surfaces on the solar heat. Since then the writer has had abundant opportunity of verifying the conclusion that the ants collected the material around and not within their mounds.

Early in the recent summer the writer saw a paragraph copied in another southwestern paper from the *Dodge City Times*, in which it was said that the ant-hills in that region indicated the presence of coal beneath the surface, as the red ants brought up fragments of it and placed it on their mounds. In the month of July we found that quite a number of persons at Dodge City had this idea. A talk we had with Editor Klaine (which he published) served to dispel this fond illusion, but it was interesting to observe the fact on which it had rested. In a walk of about seven miles easterly along the railway track from Dodge City, we observed about fifty ant-hills, and about half of them had fragments—bright, shining cubes—of coal among the quartz with which the hills were mostly covered. In Dodge City itself, on the rising ground north and for miles along the wagon road west, we found coal among the coverings of many of the ant-hills. The cause of this was not far to seek. It was very interesting to note that on the railway track a hill would be remarkable for the quantity of coal upon it, while another hill not twenty feet away had not a single black particle on it. Those having the coal were in the ditch close to the track, or on the prairie adjoining not elevated above the track, and there were always pieces of bright Trinidad coal breaking up by weathering, lying near, which had been dropped from some passing train. The hills without coal were upon high banks where such droppings were not available; or if lower, where no droppings of coal had taken place. It was the same wherever we found coal—some house was near where it had been used, or some roadway along which it had been hauled.

We have noticed further, that the ants will use other material. On the great gravel deposits of Colorado the quartz and feldspar are the prevalent coverings for these hills, but a few miles from Pueblo there are spots where the gravel has all disappeared, though it is found again only a few rods off. In some of these spots on cretaceous shale we found the mounds of the red ants without one speck of quartz, but covered entirely with thin, lenticular fragments of hematite, or limonite, from the nodules of that material which some layers of the shale contain in abundance. In places these decomposing nodules give a brown hue to several acres of slope, and ant-hills here are of the same color. In the gypsum hills of Barber county, Kansas, we found ant-hills glistening with fragments of selenite.

In short, we find the ants are somewhat like ourselves: they roof their houses with

the most available material—coal, hematite, quartz, or glass beads, even as men use clapboards, shingles, slates, or tiles.

In looking at the hills it always appears that we can easily gather a handful of the roofing material, but when we try, it is not so. It needs some little force to detach the particles. They are indeed a roof; they shed the water, so as to prevent the softer material of the building below from being washed away; and we still think that the brightest materials within reach are selected from some relation to the distribution of heat.

ADDITIONS TO THE CATALOGUE OF KANSAS BIRDS.

BY N. S. GOSS, TOPEKA.

Since the publication of my Catalogue of the Birds of Kansas, in 1883, the following additions have been made, and the same will appear in the new work, which awaits the receipt of "The American Ornithologist Union Check List of North American Birds," now in the hands of the printer, as I desire to follow its classification and nomenclature.

The three letters, "B.," "R.," and "C.," each followed by a number, stand respectively for Prof. Spencer F. Baird, Catalogue of 1858; Prof. Robert Ridgway, Catalogue of 1880; and Dr. Elliott Coues, Check List of 1882.

MERULA MIGRATORIA PROPINQUA. B.—. R. 7a. C. 2. Western Robin. A rare visitant in western Kansas. October 12, 1883, I killed two of the birds out of a flock of seven, at Wallace, Kansas.

THRYOMANES BEWICKI LEUCOGASTER. B.—. R. 61b. C. 72. Texan Bewick Wren. Resident; not uncommon in southwestern Kansas. Nests in deserted woodpecker holes, hollow logs, or any nook it may fancy; composed of sticks, roots, straws, and grasses, and lined with fur and a few downy feathers; quite bulky, generally filling the space, but in no case, I think, roofed over. Measurements of five eggs, taken at Corpus Christi, Texas, May 9, 1882: .63x.50; .63x.50; .63x.50; .63x.49; .62x.49; white, speckled with light and dark shades of reddish brown; thickest around large end; in form, oval.

ICTERIA VIRENS LONGICAUDA. B. 177. R. 123a. C. 145. Long-tailed Chat. A summer resident in the western part of the State; not uncommon. In habits and actions like the yellow-breasted, but note and song slightly different. The birds were reported by Prof. F. H. Snow, in vol. 6, page 38, Transactions of the Kansas Academy of Science, as "Taken along the Smoky Hill river, in western Kansas, by S. W. Williston, in May, 1877;" but by oversight omitted from my first Catalogue. Attention was immediately called to the same. (See Bulletin of the Nuttall Ornithological Club, vol. 8, page 227.) June 2, 1885, I shot two of the birds on Crooked creek, in Meade county, and saw several others.

VIREO ATRICAPILLUS. B. 247. R. 142. C. 185. Black-capped Vireo. Summer resident in the gypsum hills in southwestern Kansas. The habits of the birds are but little known. On the 11th of May, 1885, I found the birds building a nest near the head of a deep cañon; suspended from the forks of a small elm tree, about five feet from the ground, hemispherical in shape, and composed of broken fragments of bleached leaves, with here and there an occasional spider's cocoon, interwoven with and fastened to the twigs with fibrous strippings, threads from plants, and the webs of spiders, and lined with fine stems from weeds and grasses; above, it was screened from sight by the thick foliage of the trees, but beneath, for quite a distance, there was nothing to hide it from view. The material of which it was made, however, so